

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7346 • Fax: 517-373-5338
E-mail: senhclarke@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/SD01



April 3, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: State Sen. Hansen Clarke
OFFICE PHONE: 517/373-7346
MOBILE PHONE: 313/833-3353

SEN CLARKE: APPROVAL OF SB 157 A VICTORY FOR DETROIT'S PARENTS

Cosponsor Sees Bill as Leading to an Earlier Return of an Elected Detroit School Board

(Lansing)- State Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) today applauded the Michigan Senate's approval of SB 157 which may lead to an earlier than expected return of an elected Detroit School Board. The bill, cosponsored by Sen. Clarke, schedules a referendum for August, 2003, on whether the current appointed Detroit Reform Board should be replaced with an elected board.

"I feel strongly that the public has a right to elect public officials who are making decisions that directly impact their lives," said Sen. Clarke. "I always opposed the idea of dissolving a lawfully elected school board and replacing it with a group of appointees."

Detroit residents lost their right to select their own representatives to the Detroit School Board in 1999 when the Legislature approved a bill which dissolved the existing school board and replaced it with a reform board appointed by the Governor and the Mayor of Detroit. Four

years later, there has been no appreciable improvement in performance within the Detroit Public School System.

“I don’t think our schools can excel if our parents are not engaged in their public schools,” said Sen. Clarke. “It is hard to get parents excited about working with their school board when parents have no control, and no recourse, over the Reform Board’s actions.”

An audio clip of Sen. Clarke’s comments on the adoption of SB 157 is available at:
www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/hansenclarke/press.htm
